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INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY East Germany REPORT

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1. At a meeting of the SED Politburo on or about 30 June 1955, Ambassador G. M. Pushkin, speaking for the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, announced that the Russians were no longer in agreement with Walter Ulbricht's policies with regard to all-German affairs. They had therefore decided to "relieve Ulbricht of the negative influences surrounding him."
2. When Pushkin was making these remarks, Willi Stoph (then still Minister of the Interior) was not present; he was not called in until the Russian instructions were clearly defined. Pushkin suggested that Stoph should request that he be relieved of his duties as Minister of the Interior. Ulbricht fought bitterly to retain Stoph, but Wilhelm Pieck, Otto Grotewohl, and Hermann Matern presented a solid front in support of Pushkin; it is presumed that they had previously discussed the question with Soviet officials.
3. Stoph was called in and asked to report on his work as Minister of the Interior. He was then subjected to criticism, and Pushkin advised him to resign as Minister. This Stoph agreed to do.
4. On 2 July there was to be a conference between Pieck, Grotewohl, and two representatives of the Central Committee of the CPSU. Herbert Warnke was told to hold himself available in case he were needed for consultation. Ulbricht was not to participate in the meeting.
5. The atmosphere at recent Politburo meetings has been very tense. Some functionaries have been extremely careful in their statements, since they are not sure which way the wind will blow. Karl Schirdewan has been in especially poor spirits lately.
6. In the near future several department heads and other functionaries of the Central Committee of the SED, all supporters of Ulbricht, are to be relieved of their functions with the Central Committee and to receive assignments in the "nationalized" industry.

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-2-

1. Comment: It was hinted that Stoph was not the only "negative influence" to be removed from office; for example, there are indications that Erich Honecker was also removed at Soviet behest.

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